PLANNING GUIDANCE

US Army Corps
of Engineers

ER 1105-2-100
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Policy and Guidance Update

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Guidance Enhancement Background

- Controversies over UMRS, Delaware River, etc.
- Information Quality Act (PL 106-554, 2000)
- OMB Final Memorandum on Peer Review (2004)
- EIG Report on ITR (2004)
- National Academies “Review Procedures for Water Resources Project Planning” 2002
- “Corps Reform” legislative proposals
- EC’s 1105-2-405 through 409
- IPET – Actions For Change

Enhancement Bottom Line

- **Better accountability within the Corps**
- **Better quality decisions**
- **Better collaboration**
- **Greater consideration of risk and public safety**
- **More robust solutions**

- **<u>MORE VALUE TO THE NATION</u>**

2005 Guidance Enhancements

Engineer Circulars ***(precursor to full regulations to allow refinement based on experience)***

- **DE Presentations of Decision Documents**
- **Report Summary**
- **Planning Models Improvement Program**
- **Peer Review**
- **Collaborative Planning**

Why The Corps Does Review

- An extra set of eyes is good.
- To ensure consistent application of policy, guidance, design criteria, etc across the nation.
- USACE Goal is to always provide the most scientifically sound, sustainable water resource solutions for the U.S.
- There are numerous statutory and Administration requirements for various reviews.
- **GET IT RIGHT THE FIRST TIME!**

CIVIL WORKS REVIEW POLICY (EC 1165-2-209)

- Applies to all USACE elements having civil works responsibilities.
- Covers all levels of review from basic quality control to independent external peer review.
- All feasibility, reevaluation, major rehabilitation, project modification, post-authorization change studies.
- All CAP projects.
- All design performed for new projects, modifications to existing projects, and/or on a reimbursable basis.
- All O&M plans, reports, manuals, evaluations, and assessments etc.

Peer Review Philosophy

- An extra set of eyes is good
- Review will be scalable, deliberate, life cycle, and concurrent with business processes
- Agency technical review will be done on all products, and performed outside the “home” district
- National Academy of Science (NAS) sets the standard for “independence” in review process and complexity in a national context;
- Consistent CW review policy for all work products; and,
- USACE Goal is to always provide the most scientifically sound, sustainable water resource solutions for the U.S.

Review Plans Set the Strategy

- RPs are stand alone documents and complement the PMP.
- RPs (like PMPs) are living document and should be updated as the study progresses.
- RPs are to be coordinated with the appropriate PCX and allied PCX's.
- MSC Commanders approve the RP.
- RPs lay out the levels of review to be conducted.
- RPs will be posted on the home District public website.
- Public must be afforded the opportunity to comment on RPs.
- RPs for PED/Construction phase will be completed and presented at the CWRB.

New Names for Review Types

- District Quality Control (DQC)
  - Managed and conducted in home District by staff not directly involved with the study.
- Agency Technical Review (ATR)
  - Conducted by USACE outside of home District; for Planning products, managed by PCX
- Independent External Peer Review (IEPR)
  - Conducted by an outside eligible organization (OEO) - IRS 501(c)(3).
  - Scope of review covers all planning, engineering (including safety assurance), economics, and environmental analyses performed for the study
- Safety Assurance Review
- Policy and Legal Compliance Review

Any Of The Following Factors Require Independent External Peer Review:

(1) Significant threat to human life
(2) Total Project Cost > $45M
(3) Request by State Governor of an affected state
(4) Request by head of Federal or state agency
(5) Significant public dispute (size, nature, effects)
(6) Significant public dispute (economics, or environ costs, benefits)
(7) Novel methods, complex challenges, precedent-setting methods
(8) Any other circumstances the Chief warrants.

Watershed Plans: EC 1105-2-411

- Provides guidance on watershed planning for Integrated Water Resources Management
- Emphasizes Systems Approach, Collaboration (Partnerships), Leveraging of Resources, Larger Geographic Areas
- Follows Six Step CW Planning Process Framework
- Output – Watershed or Strategic Plan
- May identify potential Corps projects for further study
- Have an interim Assessment (Study) Agreement Model

Assuring Quality of Planning Models (EC 1105-2-412)

BASIC PHILOSOPHY

- No more “home grown” models
- Confidence and transparency in models
- Agency and External review panels being able to have enough information to understand model and its intended usage
- Keep current with technology
- Practicality in data requirements as well as ease of use
- Flexibility for a wide range of applications
- Success will be:
  - Complete toolbox of models
  - Trained users
  - Corporate process to keep models current
  - Appropriate, timely and cost-effective analysis to support decision making

What's It About?

- Credibility, transparency – show our work!
- What are the relationships in the model?
- How have we confirmed the computations are correct?
- How understandable is the model to users and reviewers?
- Documentation so people can

Basic questions for HQ Model Certification Panel to address:

- Theory
- System Testing
- Usability
- Future Developments
- Additional Considerations

Policy Guidance on Certification of Ecosystem Output Models (Aug 08)

- Key areas of the new policy include:
  - The importance, use and review of conceptual models
  - Approval of a list of standard methodological approaches
  - Conditions for the approval of US Fish and Wildlife Services (USFWS) Habitat Suitability Index (HSI) models
  - Conditions for approval of existing ecosystem output models that are documented and tested to the level required by EC 1105-2-407
  - Conditions under which the assessment of ecosystem output models will be managed by USACE or by an outside eligible organization (OEO)

Principles & Guidelines Revision

Principles:

- Water is a valued and limited natural resource that is important to human health and the natural environment.
- The quality and quantity of water resources affects all levels of our society, from the National level to that of the individual citizen.
- Water resources are an important factor in our economy, be it local or National.
- Our society is dependent upon water resources for a myriad of things, including food production and processing, recreation, manufacturing, sanitary waste disposal

Guidelines: All water resources projects should:

I. Promote economic development;
II. Preserve and restore ecosystem functions and services;
III. Promote wise use of floodplains and flood-prone areas;
IV. Use a watershed approach;
V. Use best available practices, analytical techniques, procedures and tools;
VI. Use a planning process with a level of detail commensurate with the investment level and type of the study;
VII. Account for benefits and costs in appropriate monetary and non-monetary terms;
VIII. Account for significant effects and mitigate any unavoidable impacts to ecosystem functions and services;
IX. Address risk and uncertainty;
X. Address public safety;
XI. Ensure the planning process is fully transparent; and
XII. Promote collaboration.

Additional Recent & Anticipated Guidance

- **Office Of Management And Budget Clearance For *The Questionnaires For U.S. Army Engineer Civil Works Studies And Projects* (ER 1165-2-503)**
- **Policy Guidance on Certification of Ecosystem Output Models (memorandum August 2008)**
- **Sea Level Change (EC 1165-2-211 July 2009)**
- **Risk-informed Planning**

Leadership Emphasis

- Economic & Environmental sustainability
- Systems approaches
- Collaborative approaches
- Risk reduction & public safety
- Uncertainty - scenarios
- Strengthened independent review
- Reports should inform budget process
- Continual process

Collaboration Strategy Includes:

- Identify parties involved in the effort
- Level of engagement for each party
- Phase of activity for involvement

- Bottom line: Develop a strategy early!

See: CEQ Collaboration in the NEPA Process: A Handbook for NEPA Practionioners 2007

Collaboration Strategy is Important:

- To plan wisely for success of effort
- To be able to communicate nature of collaboration clearly to others
- To make sure expectations of all parties are aligned

- Basic Questions:
  - Who will participate, to what extent, what phase, other issues potentially issues?

Steps in Restoration Planning

- Resource Significance
- Factors in degradation – past, present, future
  - Uncertainty, conceptual models
- Range of “fixes” to address
  - Who best to implement? Sequence aspects?
- How to measure ecological “lift”
- How do alternatives perform?
- Compare alternatives
  - Differing extents and treatments
  - Completeness, effectiveness, efficiency, acceptability
  - Sustainability; residual risk
- Recommend
- National perspective – where can we get the most value for our limited budget?
- Challenges – climate change, non-stationarity, collaborative implementation. THINK!!

Planning CoP Website:

http://www.usace.army.mil/CECW/PlanningCOP/Pages/ArticleTemplate.aspx

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